

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 16, 2017

COMMITTEES:

FINANCE

BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS

COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION

VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Honorable Pat Roberts
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition, and Forestry
328A Russell Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture,
Nutrition, and Forestry
328A Russell Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Roberts and Ranking Member Stabenow,

As wildfires continue to rage across California and the Western United States, I am writing you to urge your committee to immediately consider the issue of forest management reform at the next legislative opportunity. Legislation like my Emergency Fuel Reduction Act (S.1752) will bring much needed forest management reforms to our federal land management agencies to prevent the spread of these deadly blazes.

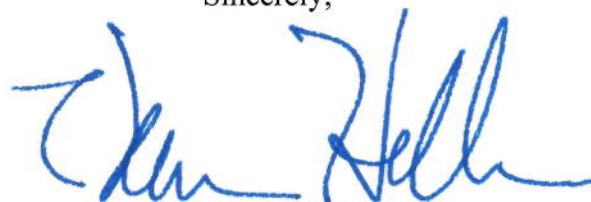
This year's fire season has been one of the worst on record, burning over 8.5 million acres of land across the Western United States. Multiple wildfires continue to burn through California, taking the lives of at least 40 people and destroying numerous homes and communities. In my home state of Nevada, we have sustained 1.2 million acres of damage alone, threatening rural communities all across the Silver State. This is why I reintroduced my legislation, the Emergency Fuel Reduction Act, which will speed up the approval process for fuel reduction projects on federal lands.

Specifically, my legislation would exempt fuel reduction projects from the NEPA process on federal lands that are under 10,000 acres and pose a risk for wildfire. It also allows for the expedited clean-up of lands filled with dead or dying trees, insect infested trees, and other hazardous fuels that pose a threat to infrastructure or endangered species habitat.

The Emergency Fuel Reduction Act is one of many common sense proposals introduced in the Senate that will reform current forest management practices. Given the devastating effects of this fire season on Nevada and the entire West, I respectfully urge your committee to consider serious forest management reform legislation, like the Emergency Fuel Reduction Act, at the next legislative opportunity in order to improve forest health and slow the spread and frequency of wildfires across the Western United States.

Thank you for considering this request. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or my staff if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Dean Heller
U.S. Senator